

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON, FAO

SUBJECT: 9TH SESSION FAO INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON HARD
FIBERS, ROME 30 JUNE - 4 JULY

FROM U.S. DELEGATE J. WILLIAMS

1. AS PREDICTED AT LAST MEETING OF THE GROUP IN MANILA IN JANUARY, THE MARKET SITUATION FOR ALL HARD FIBERS HAS DETERIORATED: PRICES ARE AT LEVELS CONSIDERABLY BELOW THEIR HISTORIC HIGHS OF 1974-1975 AND STILL FALLING WHILE STOCKS CONTINUE TO INCREASE.
 2. TONE FOR DISCUSSIONS ON SISAL AND HENEQUEN WAS SET BY WELL-PREPARED FAO SECRETARIAT DOCUMENT "MEDIUM-TERM PROSPECTS FOR SISAL AND HENEQUEN," WHICH PERHAPS SUCCEEDED IN DRIVING HOME TO FIBER-PRODUCING COUNTRIES ACCELERATING RATE OF SYNTHETIC TWINE LIKELY OVER NEXT THREE YEARS. PRODUCER COUNTRIES RAISED QUESTION OF FORMAL ARRANGMENT FOR FIBER WHICH WAS MET WITH SUGGESTIONS OF FURTHER STUDY BY SEVERAL CONSUMER NATIONS. DISCUSSION OF ISSUE WAS NOT RPT NOT PURSUED WHEN BRAZILIAN DELEGATE, FOLLOWING CABLED INSTRUCTIONS, WITHDREW HIS TENTATIVE SUPPORT.
 3. LED BY MEXICO, SEVERAL PRODUCING COUNTRIES REQUESTED DIS-
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CUSSION OF INDICATIVE PRICE FOR NATURAL FIBER BOILER TWINE.

U.S. DELEGATE POINTED OUT THAT THIS WAS UNWORKABLE DUE TO COMPETITION BETWEEN TWINE-PRODUCING COUNTRIES AND UNNECESSARY BECAUSE SYNTHETIC TWINE PRODUCTION COSTS AND PRICES, GENERALLY KNOWN, COULD VERY WELL SERVE AS INDICATIVE PRICE FOR NATURAL FIBER TWINE. INFORMAL PRICE ARRANGMENT ON FIBER HAS NOT RPT NOT WORKED AND INFORMAL PRICE ARRANGEMENT ON TWINE WILL NOT RPT NOT WORK FOR MUCH THE SAME REASONS: COMPETITION FROM SYNTHETIC TWINE AND PRODUCER COMPETITION FOR MARKETS. WHILE THESE ARRANGMENTS ARE FACTUAL AND TACTICALLY THE MOST EFFECTIVE, U.S. POSITION RESTS ON FACT THAT ANY INDICATIVE PRICE MECHANISM WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF U.S. FARMER.

4. PHILIPPINE ABACA FIBER INDUSTRY IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE WITH VERY HIGH STOCKS. PRICES ARE DIFFICULT TO ACCURATELY DETERMINE WITH BUYERS ALMOST COMPLETELY OUT OF THE MARKET. PRODUCTION IN ECUADOR CONTINUES TO EXPAND, LARGELY UNDER CONTRACTUAL ARRANGMENTS WITH U.S. SPECIALITY PAPER MANUFACTURERS.

5. THE GROUP ACCEPTED INVITATION OF KENYA TO HOLD TENTH SESSION IN NAIROBI 9-13 FEBRUARY 1976. VOLPE

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